



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Biosecurity

Work Instruction

Security and movement of horticultural produce

Title: Security and movement of horticultural produce			
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1. Purpose

Working instructions for the secure storage and movement of fresh fruit and vegetables intended for export.

Applies to Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) Authorised Officers (AAO).

Must be read in conjunction with the New Zealand Systems Operation Manual.

2. Occupational health and safety

As an AQIS Authorised Officer you must not enter a site unless you are confident it is safe and are aware of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) hazards.

Important! All sites are different and you must always comply with AQIS OH&S policies and relevant state or territory OH&S policies.

Refer to volume 16 in the Plant Export Operations Manual (PEOM) for more details.

3. Activities

3.1 Securing treated product in storage

Ensure goods that have been inspected, treated, or 'area freedom' product, are stored in pest and contamination free areas, under these guidelines.

3.1.1 Physical barriers:

- physical barriers, such as walls or solid structures, are created to isolate treated product from untreated product or product of unknown status. A secure entire barrier or secure unit is created to prevent pests from moving to pest-free commodity
- understand the risks associated with pest movement, which vary depending on the pest (for example, scale insects or larvae compared to crawlers or winged pests)
- when shrink-wrapping packages and the pallet is used to form a physical barrier, the base, top of pallet (such as with a sheet of cardboard) and all sides must be sealed

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- Each pallet is closed with a mesh cloth—maximum opening no larger than 1.6 mm diagonally (including the surface area between the bottom row of cartons and the actual pallet, and a cap piece lid)
- if individual cartons are used to create a physical barrier, screen openings between cartons, covered with mesh or gauze, are no larger than maximum 1.6 mm diagonally
- the same physical barriers are re-applied to all product deconsolidated and split into multiple lots.

3.1.2 Distance (inside and outside cool rooms)

Treated product is physically isolated from untreated product or product of unknown status. Sometimes this can be achieved by creating a minimal acceptable distance between the two sets of product. Minimum acceptable distances vary depending on the product and where it is stored (inside or outside cool rooms).

3.1.2.1 Inside cool rooms (held at 5°C or below)

Maintain a minimum 0.5 m separation (except never for product claiming “fruit fly area free status”). Maintain full package or pallet security.

Note: The Systems Operations Manual requires one metre separation.

3.1.2.2 Outside cool rooms or inside cool rooms (held above 5°C)

Maintain one metre separation, but only if a quarantine pest is not endemic in the environment (except never with product claiming “fruit fly area free status” or designated “in an unsecure manner”). Maintain full package or pallet security.

3.1.3 Do not certify commodity breaching product security or product integrity at any stage.

3.1.4 Ensure staff loading containers and reefer vessels move product from the secure area with minimum time delays. If delays occur during loading, ensure container doors or vessel hatch covers are closed and remaining unloaded product secured.

3.2 Handling product security while in transit

3.2.1 Ensure exporters and packers understand their options for transporting treated goods (including after inspection)—subject to fruit fly area freedom.

3.2.2 Ensure product is moved to prevent cross-infestation or contamination by meeting these measures:

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- screen individual cartons holes (see 3.1.1)
- fully shrink-wrap and seal (see 3.1.1)
- fully enclose each pallet with shade mesh cloth (see 3.1.1)
- load into a sealed shipping container with vent holes and openings (such as drain holes or air intakes) secured—openings cannot be larger than 1.6 mm (drain holes, air intakes, etc.)
- load directly into pantech or tautliner vans and seal (see 3.3).

3.2.3 Monitor security of cartons and/or pallets before inspecting.

3.2.4 Refuse to certify product that breaches security (such as torn shrink wrapping).

3.2.5 Confirm the regional technical manager has ensured that companies with Approved Arrangements a) transfer goods in a secure manner and b) maintain security at the delivery point.

3.3 Loading product onto pantechs and tautliners

3.3.1 Seal pantechs and tautliners (and cartons and/or pallets not secured under 3.1.1) carrying product.

3.3.2 Endorse seal numbers on a transfer certificate.

3.4 Supervising the unloading of product on pantechs and tautliners

3.4.1 Ensure arrangements are in place for you to monitor the unloading of goods on arrival.

3.4.2 Ensure fruit is unloaded at a single facility—no stops along the way.

3.4.3 Supervise the unloading of product from pantechs and tautliners (where product has not been secured) by ensuring shrink-wrapped mixed loads, cartons or pallets are separated into individual sections with a mesh physical barrier—only fruit treated in the same way can be loaded into a sealed van unsecured.

3.4.4 Ensure— if you are not going to be present when produce is unloaded—that the regional technical manager who will supervise the unloading follows approved arrangements, assesses importing country requirements and assesses the degree of risk.

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- 3.4.5 Before arranging for the regional technical manager to supervise, ensure the establishment has submitted, in writing, the procedures they will use for unloading, including:
- how security will be maintained
 - who will be responsible for maintaining security
 - how procedures followed will be documented (including presenting truck seals to AQIS at inspection (or another agreed time)).
- 3.4.6 Only approve a regional technical manager to supervise unloading if the establishment involved has a history of past compliance. Monitor arrangements and ensure immediate resumption of AQIS supervision if the regional technical manager is found to not comply.
- 3.4.7 Note: In the case of New Zealand, the Systems Operation Manual delegates responsibility for security of product during transportation and arrival to the exporter or exporter's delegate. However, the exporter (or delegate) is subject to audit and must be able to demonstrate compliance with the SOM.

3.5 Using the transfer certificate

- 3.5.1 Ensure the transfer certificate is used:
- in accordance with the *Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Orders*
 - for consignments of horticulture produce transported between registered export establishments or moved from one regional centre to another
 - not for consignments moved within regional or metropolitan areas.

Note: The transfer certificate gives the receiving establishment confidence that the product met all phytosanitary requirements when it departed from a registered establishment. It also gives confidence that—subject to proper security during transport and at the receipt establishment—the goods can be certified as meeting importing country requirements. This is critical when fruit fly host products produced in an area free of fruit flies are transported through potentially infested areas or loaded for export in an area that does not have area freedom (as recognised by the importing country authority).

- 3.5.2 Ensure a transfer certificate is used when the:
- goods originate from an area free of fruit fly or other pests or disease
 - goods are to be transported after treatment
 - goods are to be transported after AQIS inspection
 - work plan requires the registration of grower orchard and blocks to be recorded (for example, citrus to Thailand)

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- importing country has a specific requirement (for example, citrus to Korea).
- 3.5.3 Ensure copies of transfer certificates are faxed from the originating regional AQIS office (or from companies operating under an Approved Arrangement) to the receiving AQIS office.
- 3.5.4 Ensure companies operating under Approved Arrangements transfer fruit on a Company transfer certificate, which you must approve.

3.6 Completing transfer certificates

- 3.6.1 Ensure that the Transfer certificates are numbered in line with the system used for numbering Phytosanitary certificates.
- 3.6.2 Ensure accurate information is recorded in the Restrictions and comments field, detailing legislative or importing country requirements met before despatch.
- 3.6.3 Ensure the following information is recorded in the Restrictions and comments field:
- treatments conducted
 - area or property freedom
 - inspections
 - other conditions to be met as an importing country requirement or as required under a work plan
 - seal numbers (if applicable).

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