



Plant Export Operations Branch

Work Instruction

Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	V2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 1 of 15

CONTENTS

1. PURPOSE.....	3
2. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	3
3. ACTIVITIES.....	3
3.1 Preparing for inspection.....	3
3.2 Trade description.....	7
3.3 Sampling method.....	7
3.4 Sampling rate.....	7
3.5 Subdividing consignments into lots.....	7
3.6 Preparing for sampling.....	8
3.7 Sampling.....	9
3.8 Inspecting samples.....	10
3.9 Goods passing inspection.....	14
3.10 Rejecting samples.....	14
3.11 Reconditioning and reinspecting.....	15
3.12 Reporting, administration and documentation.....	15

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 2 of 15

1. Purpose

Work instructions for sampling and inspecting the following for export certification purposes:

- nursery stock
- cut flowers
- cut foliage.

Applies to Department of Agriculture (department) authorised officers (AOs) sampling and inspecting consignments and lots of these products that require phytosanitary inspection and certification.

2. Work health and safety

As an AO you must not enter a site unless you are confident it is safe and are aware of Work Health and Safety (WH&S) hazards.

Important! All sites are different and you must always comply with the department's WH&S policies and relevant state or territory WH&S policies.

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

3. Activities

3.1 Preparing for inspection

3.1.1 Pre-inspection tasks

- Receive a request for an inspection of a consignment.
- Check if there is a case in Manual of Importing Country Requirements (MICO R) Plants for each product.
 - If there is a not a case in MICO R Plants you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they need to obtain the import requirements from the importing country authority and email these to the MICO R Plants administrator. The import requirements will need to be assessed and MICO R Plants updated before the consignment can be inspected.
- Check the MICO R Plants case for each product to see if the importing country authority requires an import permit.
 - If an import permit is required and has not been provided you cannot continue with the inspection.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 3 of 15

- Advise the client that they need to present an import permit before the consignment can be inspected.
- If an import permit is required and has been provided at time of inspection you need to check it is valid as per the Work Instruction: *Validating supporting documents for plant exports*.
 - If the import permit is not valid you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they need to obtain a valid import permit before the consignment can be inspected.
- Check the import requirements on the import permit match the MICoR Plants case for each product.
 - If the import requirements do not match you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they need to email the import permit to the MICoR Plants administrator. The import permit will be assessed and MICoR Plants updated before the consignment can be inspected.

Note: If you are a departmental inspection AO than you do not have to complete the following step as this has been done for you by the appointment AO.

If you are an external inspection AO:

- Check what form the NOI must be presented in as per the Guideline: *Issuance of certification for plant exports*.
 - If the client has not presented the correct form of NOI you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they must present the correct form of NOI before the consignment can be inspected.
- If the NOI is a Request for Permit (RFP) check that it is at initial (INIT) or final (FINL) status.
 - If the RFP is not at INIT or FINL status you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they must present the RFP in the correct status before the consignment can be inspected.
- If the NOI is an EX28 check that it has been completed correctly as per the Reference: *Completion of a Notice of Intention (EX28) User Guide*.
 - If the EX28 has not been completed correctly you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they must present a correctly completed EX28 before the consignment can be inspected.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 4 of 15

- If the NOI is an EX28 check that the export registered establishment (ERE) on the NOI is currently registered by checking the Certificate of Registration displayed at the ERE or by checking with the department's regional office.
 - If the ERE is not currently registered you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they must present a correctly completed EX28 before the consignment can be inspected.

- Check that the ERE has one or more of the plant export registered operations as per the Reference: *Registered operation codes for plant export registered establishments*.
 - If the ERE does not have one or more plant export registered operations you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that the ERE must be registered for plant exports before the consignment can be inspected.

- Check whether the client needs to complete any manual certification as per the MICoR Plants case, that they have used the correct template and that the template has been completed correctly as per the:
 - Reference: *Completion of a Phytosanitary Certificate (E16) User Guide*
 - Reference: *Completion of a Ship's Holds Certificate (EX175) User Guide*
 - Reference: *Completion of a Declaration and Certificate as to Condition (EX188) User Guide*
 - Reference: *Completion of a Certification as to Condition (EX46A) User Guide*
 - Reference: *Completion of a Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-Export (EX25) User Guide*
 - Reference: *Completion of a Radioactivity Statement User Guide*.
 - If these certificates have not been completed correctly you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they need to complete the certificate correctly before the consignment can be inspected.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 5 of 15

Note: The following steps apply to both departmental and external inspection AOs.

- Check that you have received all supporting documents required prior to inspection as per the Reference: *Plant export documents and treatments checklists* and the MICoR Plants case/s.
 - If all the supporting documents have not been received you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they need to obtain the supporting documents before the consignment can be inspected.
- Check that the supporting documents you have received are valid as per the Work Instruction: *Validating supporting documents for plant exports*.
 - If any of the supporting documents are not valid you cannot continue with the inspection.
 - Advise the client that they need to obtain valid supporting documents before the consignment can be inspected

3.1.2 On site:

- ensure appropriate equipment is at hand
- ensure inspection area is fit for purpose:
 - clean
 - free from pests, contamination and sources of cross contamination
 - correctly lit (at least 600 lux)
 - has a waste bin.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, advanced nursery (such as trees, large tree ferns and palm trees) may be inspected outdoors on a soil-free surface. The inspection area, and surrounding area, must be clean and free from weeds and pests.

3.1.3 Consignment or lot

- ensure overall condition and exterior is homogenous
- ensure trade description requirements have been met
- ensure, where an entire consignment or lot is to be inspected, that it is fully assembled and accessible for sampling (for example, must have access to at least 2 sides of pallets)
- confirm total number of units
- determine sampling rate (refer 3.7 selection of samples).
- ensure the overall makeup matches the details in the export documentation

Note: If quantities are not obvious, it may be necessary to count packages. Only break down pallets if in doubt or if access to particular samples is needed.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 6 of 15

3.2 Trade description

Be aware of basic requirements for trade description noting that the minimum requirements are for accuracy and adequacy.

Note: Adequacy is not specific. It means 'sufficient to readily identify the goods as clear and correct'. Simple labelling is acceptable.

3.3 Sampling method

Use a single-stage sampling method, including the package and the product.

3.4 Sampling rate

Sample the consignment or lot using either rate below:

- a 600-unit sample for bulbs, corms, tubers or similar. If there are less than 600 units, inspect all units
- for cut flowers, cut foliage, tissue cultures, unpacked plants/plant material in accordance with the rates in Table 1.

Table 1: Sampling Rates

Number of *units forming the lot to be sampled	Number of *units from the lot to be inspected
2–15	2
16–50	3
51–500	5
501–3200	8
3201 and over	13

*A unit is a package, a piece of dried tree fruit, unpacked plant or plant material, a flask, a jar or a tube.

3.5 Subdividing consignments into lots

3.5.1 Inform the client they can divide consignments into lots for these reasons:

- different growers
- different pre-harvest or post-harvest treatments
- risks with particular species or varieties
- climatic or seasonal conditions that may affect pest loads.

3.5.2 Where a consignment is subdivided, identify each lot on the lot itself and also on the approved export compliance record by:

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 7 of 15

- ruling a line across the page
- recording each consignment/lot on a separate approved export compliance record.

3.6 Preparing for sampling

Cut flowers, cut foliage, tissue culture, plants, cuttings, advanced nursery stock

- 3.6.1 Inspect the entire consignment or lot in one place and sample at one time. Drawing samples from any part of the consignment or lot can require moving product for access.
- 3.6.2 For in-line inspection, determine the total units in the consignment or lot, the sampling rate, production start and finish times, and frequency at which samples will be taken.
- 3.6.3 Subdivide lots /consignments, if required, before sampling.
- 3.6.4 Sample at regular time intervals or each time a certain number of units are produced. Only sample from a continuous production run (over a period not exceeding 12 hours and not including breaks to pack product for domestic or other markets).
- 3.6.5 Record the sampling frequency on the Phytosanitary inspection record.
- 3.6.6 Check that trade description requirements (if applicable) have been met and that the goods are in clean, new packages. Apply the trade description as a pallet label where products are unitised.
- 3.6.7 Do not proceed with inspection if the consignment or lot does not comply with trade description requirements. In this case complete an approved rejection form.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 8 of 15

Bulbs, corms, tubers or similar

- 3.6.8 In-line sampling is not permitted for these products.
- 3.6.9 Inspect the entire consignment or lot in one place and sample at one time. Drawing samples from any part of the consignment or lot can require moving product for access.
- 3.6.10 Sample from 600 units. If there is less than this amount, inspect all units (meaning all bulbs, corms, tubers or similar).
- 3.6.11 Check that trade description requirements (if applicable) have been met and that the goods are in clean, new packages. Apply the trade description as a pallet label where products are unitised.

Do not proceed with inspection if the consignment or lot does not comply with trade description requirements.

3.7 Sampling

Cut flowers, cut foliage, tissue culture, plants, cuttings, advanced nursery stock

- 3.7.1 Take a random sample (as far as is practical) across the entire consignment or lot. Each Genus must be inspected. If the samples selected (Table 1) do not include each Genus in the consignment or lot then inspect at least one carton or unit of each extra Genus in addition to the initial sample.
- 3.7.2 Cover all packers and as many growers as possible in the sample selection.
- 3.7.3 For entire consignments or lots, take samples from layers of pallets (for example, first sample, top layer; second sample, second layer; third sample, third layer; fourth sample top layer; fifth sample, second layer and so on). Take samples from other parts of pallets if you need to (for example, consignments or lots of mixed product).
- 3.7.4 Identify selected sample packages through any means acceptable to the product's owner. This could be by removing or turning packages or by making discrete marks or applying discrete stickers.
- 3.7.5 Take samples to the inspection area for inspecting. Handling packages and re-packing produce is industry's responsibility.

Bulbs, corms, tubers or similar

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 9 of 15

- 3.7.1 Take a random sample (as far as is practical) across the entire consignment or lot. Include, as far as possible, each Genus.
- 3.7.2 Cover all packers and as many growers as possible in the sample selection. For entire consignments or lots, take samples from layers of pallets (for example, first sample, top layer; second sample, second layer; third sample, third layer; fourth sample top layer; fifth sample, second layer and so on). Take samples from other parts of pallets if you need to (for example, consignments or lots of mixed product).
- 3.7.3 Identify selected sample packages through any means acceptable to the product's owner. This could be by removing or turning packages or by making discrete marks or applying discrete stickers.
- 3.7.4 Take samples to the inspection area for inspecting. Handling packages and re-packing produce is industry's responsibility.

3.8 Inspecting samples

Many types of product are inspected for export so these inspection techniques are a general guide.

- 3.8.1 Use the approved export compliance record to record details of the inspection as it takes place. Record each unit inspected individually.
- 3.8.2 Check the sample package again to ensure the trade description applies and that the package is new and clean. Wear gloves to protect yourself and the product being handled.
- 3.8.3 Decide the best way to handle contents and inspect. Examples:
 - turn over telescopic cartons and transfer produce left in the lid to the inner during inspection
 - empty produce onto the inspection bench
 - use inspection benches specially designed for particular products (for example, bulbs or tubers that need to be re-bagged)
 - open inner packages, such as bags, linings or wrapping, to inspect produce
 - use proper lighting for commodities, such as advanced nursery stock, that cannot be raised onto inspection benches.
- 3.8.4 When first opening the package, and before handling the produce:
 - inspect the surface of contents for contamination, such as leaves, trash and soil

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 10 of 15

- examine the inside of the package for pests and contaminants
 - if bagged, inspect the outside of the bag and in the bag (after tipping).
- 3.8.5 You may use magnification and/or cuts to verify anything you detected during your visual inspection.
- 3.8.6 Apply zero tolerance if you find:
- soil
 - contaminants, including weed seeds
 - pests, including arthropods and disease.
- 3.8.7 Be alert for the wide variety of symptoms indicating that pest presence, such as:
- chewed product—insects such as caterpillars
 - soft spots and rots—disease
 - stings—internal feeders
 - holes—borers or weevils
 - webbing—caterpillars such as loopers or leaf rollers
 - speckling on the leaf or blemishes on product—mites, thrips or aphids
 - sticky honeydew and associated sooty mould (fine black powder)—aphids, mealy bug
 - uneven yellowing of leaf or spots on product—virus
 - rolled leaves—thrips or caterpillars
 - leaf spotting—yellowish, dark brown or black and possibly with yellow halo-bacteria
 - water-soaked areas on leaf—bacteria or fungus
 - powdery appearance—fungus or mildew
 - galls—gall wasp or nematodes on roots, stems or leaves.
- 3.8.8 Place cold and immobile arthropod pests on a small circle drawn on white paper. As the pest warms up, it is more likely to move.
- 3.8.9 Cut flowers and cut foliage:
- fully inspect each unit (for example, carton) after emptying contents on the inspection bench
 - inspect the inside of the package

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 11 of 15

- examine each bunch or individual flower(s) or foliage by turning upside down, tapping stems and shaking over an inspection tray to dislodge arthropods
- examine 5 stems from each unit using at least x 10 magnification. If mixed Genera are in a unit, inspect 5 stems for each one. Pay attention to all surfaces of the flower head, especially under petals and sepals. Check the underside of leaves
- inspect the tray for live pests remembering that some, such as mites, are very small.

3.8.10 Plant and cuttings:

- note special conditions on the approved export compliance record, such as mother stock, destructive testing and virus indexing
- fully inspect each unit (for example, carton) after emptying contents on the inspection bench
- inspect the inside of the package
- examine suspect pests and/or contamination using at least x 10 magnification
- usually, inspect each plant or piece one at a time. If there are many cuttings, examine 5 pieces from each unit using at least x 10 magnification. If mixed Genera are in a unit, inspect 5 pieces for each one. Pay attention to all surfaces, especially under the leaves
- ensure importing country conditions are met for potting medium. Generally soil is prohibited but peat, perlite, vermiculite and similar sterile media might be permitted
- inspect the top of the material for live pests and symptoms of disease, noting that some, such as mites, are very small
- place cold and immobile arthropod pests on a small circle drawn on white paper. As the pest warms up, it is more likely to move
- inspect the lower portion for callus or roots and for pests or symptoms such as galls and contamination
- regularly inspect the bench top for pests—throughout the inspection.

3.8.11 Advanced nursery stock:

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 12 of 15

- note special conditions on the approved export compliance record, such as mother stock, destructive testing and virus indexing
- ensure, when inspecting large units outdoors such as trees, that the area is clean and free from risk of cross infestation or infection from surrounding areas
- examine suspect pests and/or contamination using at least x 10 magnification
- inspect packaging for pests or contamination
- inspect one at a time from the bottom up starting with the root ball
- ensure importing country conditions are met for potting medium. Generally soil is prohibited but peat, perlite, vermiculite and similar sterile media might be permitted
- inspect the lower portion, which might include roots, for pests or symptoms such as galls
- examine the trunk for pests, eggs, signs of webbing and frass, paying particular attention to damaged areas, knots and loose bark. With borers, that are often difficult to detect, look for small breather holes, tracks just under the surface of the bark and frass that may be on the plant's surface
- inspect live and dead branches for evidence of pests. Spiders might be under bark and on smaller branches. Check around buds for dormant material
- with leaves check for live pests, particularly egg masses, larvae and small arthropods, as well as for symptoms of disease, noting that some pests, such as mites, are very small
- place cold and immobile arthropod pests on a small circle drawn on white paper. As the pest warms up, it is more likely to move
- ensure the trade description on labels applied is correct.

3.8.12 Tissue culture:

- note special conditions on the approved export compliance record, such as mother stock, destructive testing and virus indexing
- inspect each flask, tube or jar for fungal growth and evidence of pests. Arthropods would not be normally found. Most pests found are diseases
- inspect the medium (usually agar) for discolouration that might indicate contamination or disease. Some agar contains nutrients or charcoal that colour the compound. Some importing countries stipulate a certain type of medium
- ensure the trade description on labels applied is correct.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 13 of 15

3.8.13 Bulbs, corms, tubers and similar:

- note special conditions on the approved export compliance record, such as mother stock, destructive testing and virus indexing
- examine suspect pests and/or contamination using at least x 10 magnification
- place product onto a bench and inspect empty packages for pests or contamination
- inspect product over an inspection tray for pests, paying particular attention to the presence of soil and pests that may be under loose material or around the neck of bulbs
- ensure the trade description on labels applied is correct.

3.9 Goods passing inspection

3.9.1 Clearly identify goods passing inspection, by labelling or by placing them in a defined area and ensuring the area is free from pests and contamination.

3.9.2 Ensure goods being transported are subject to security from contamination to maintain phytosanitary integrity.

3.10 Rejecting samples

3.10.1 Reject the entire consignment or lot if you find pests, soil, weed seeds and/or contaminants or if something else does not pass inspection (exceptions noted in 3.11.3).

3.10.2 Apply zero tolerance unless otherwise specified by an importing country. You may need to consult with the department's regional supervisors or managers since some minor pests are not regulated.

3.10.3 Do not reject the entire consignment or lot when:

- parts of the completed consignment are secured against the pest or contamination that gave rise to rejection. To determine this bear in mind that:
 - 'secured' means packages that are fully enclosed or that have, at all times, been and remain separated
 - parts of the consignment or lot must be secure from pests or contamination and can only be passed once a full sample rate has been taken of the passed component—this may mean additional packages need to be sampled to make up the full sample
 - packages may be reconditioned and resubmitted for another complete inspection.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 14 of 15

- 3.10.4 Put on hold the entire consignment or lot—from receipt to finished product—when a rejection results from an in-line inspection:
- This includes product previously passed. Reassess this product to check if enough samples were taken to meet the Product Monitoring System sampling rate. If not, draw additional samples and inspect.
 - If additional samples do not pass, reject the entire consignment or lot, including product still in production.
 - Following rejection and before production resumes, assess the source product and disinfest and/or disinfect the entire production line (method used will depend on the pest found).
- 3.10.5 Complete the approved export compliance record when you find prescribed goods are not suitable for export. Ensure all details are accurate.

3.11 Reconditioning and reinspecting

- 3.11.1 The exporter can recondition rejected consignments, at their own expense and using a method that addresses the quarantine risk and biology of the pest. The department will not stipulate treatment unless required to do so by an importing country.
- 3.11.2 The exporter must re-present reconditioned consignments intended for export for phytosanitary inspection and:
- provide details of the goods being resubmitted in writing
 - describe the corrective measures taken to ensure they meet export requirements.

3.12 Reporting, administration and documentation

- 3.12.1 Complete an approved export compliance record, for each inspection, and sign off.
- 3.12.2 Provide client a copy of the completed Export Compliance Record.
- 3.12.3 Forward the department all completed approved export compliance records for completing the Phytosanitary Certificate and any supporting documentation.
- 3.12.4 Retain original completed Export Compliance Record and any supporting documentation for a minimum of 2 years for auditing purposes.

Title: Sampling and inspection for export certification of nursery stock, cut flowers and cut foliage			
Date Published	Current Version Number	Program	Page Number
20 January 2017	v2.1	Horticulture Export Program	Page 15 of 15