

Release of draft import risk analysis for fresh decrowned pineapple fruit from Malaysia

Questions and Answers –19 October 2011

Import risk analysis (IRA)

Why is this IRA being undertaken?

Australia is responding to Malaysia's market access request to export fresh decrowned pineapple fruit to Australia dating back from 2004.

What is an IRA?

An import risk analysis is a regulated process that identifies and assesses the risks posed by the pests and diseases relevant to an import proposal. If those risks exceed Australia's appropriate level of protection (ALOP) the IRA report specifies what measures should be taken to reduce those risks to an acceptable level. The IRA process is described in the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2011*, available on the Biosecurity Australia website.

The IRA process involves releasing a draft IRA report for a 60-day stakeholder comment period, considering and incorporating the comments into a provisional final IRA report. The provisional IRA report is then published for an appeals period. Appeals are considered by the Import Risk Analysis Appeals Panel, which is independent of Biosecurity Australia.

A final IRA report is published after an import policy determination is made by the Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine.

What is the purpose of the draft IRA report?

The *Draft import risk analysis for the importation of fresh decrowned pineapple (Ananas comosus L. Merr.) fruit from Malaysia* is a scientific analysis that assesses Malaysia's request to export fresh decrowned pineapple fruit to Australia. In this report decrowned pineapple fruit are defined as fruit with crown, basal and scale leaves removed.

The report identifies quarantine risks associated with fresh decrowned pineapple fruit and proposes quarantine measures to reduce the risks to a very low level, in line with Australia's approach to biosecurity.

The draft IRA report is a key step that gives all stakeholders an opportunity to comment and to draw attention to any gaps in data, misinterpretations or errors.

What quarantine pests have been identified?

The draft IRA report identifies four pests of quarantine concern. They are *Dysmicoccus grassii* (mealybug); *Dysmicoccus neobrevipes* (grey pineapple mealybug); *Planococcus minor* (Pacific mealybug); *Pseudococcus jackbeardsleyi* (Jack Beardsley mealybug).

What quarantine measures have been proposed for fresh decrowned pineapples from Malaysia?

This draft report proposes a combination of risk management measures and operational systems that will reduce the risk associated with the importation of fresh decrowned fresh pineapple from Malaysia into Australia to achieve Australia's ALOP, specifically:

- Pre-shipment or on-arrival methyl bromide fumigation or an alternative post harvest treatment approved by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) for mealybugs
- an operational system for the maintenance and verification of the phytosanitary status of pineapple fruit, including:
 - registration of export plantations;
 - registration of packing houses and auditing of procedures
 - registration of fumigators / treatment facilities and auditing of procedures
 - packaging and labelling requirements
 - specific conditions for storage and transport
 - pre-export phytosanitary inspection and certification by Department of Agriculture, Malaysia
 - on-arrival phytosanitary inspection, remedial action when required, and clearance by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

Will Australia be adequately protected from exotic pests?

A comprehensive risk assessment of pests of quarantine concern has been undertaken and, where appropriate, risk management options have been proposed to address risks associated with exotic pests and diseases entering Australia.

The assessment is based on the latest available scientific information and the measures proposed reflect Australia's overall approach to managing quarantine risks.

Are there any regional differences for Australian states?

Regional differences have been identified for one pest (*Planococcus minor*). This pest has been identified as a quarantine pest for Western Australia. The proposed quarantine measures take account of this regional difference.

Does Australia currently allow any imports of pineapples?

Yes. Australia currently permits the importation of fresh pineapple fruit from the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Solomon Islands subject to the following phytosanitary conditions:

- registration of source plantations and fumigation facilities
- designation of pest-free areas for *Fusarium subglutinans* (not present in Malaysia)
- in-field control for false codling moth (not present in Malaysia)
- de-crowning
- fumigation of all consignments with methyl bromide (pre-export or on-arrival)
- packing and labelling compliance
- storage compliance
- phytosanitary inspections pre-export and on-arrival.

Was the disease known to cause bacterial heart rot and fruit collapse in pineapples in Malaysia considered as part of this IRA?

The disease known to cause bacterial heart rot and fruit collapse in Malaysian pineapple production systems—*Erwinia chrysanthemi*—was assessed as part of this IRA.

The comprehensive risk assessment has shown that the overall likelihood that this disease could be imported as a result of trade in fresh pineapple from Malaysia; be distributed in a viable state to a susceptible host; establish; and spread within Australia was considered to be below Australia's ALOP.

Consultation

How does Biosecurity Australia consult stakeholders?

The regulated import risk analysis process requires Biosecurity Australia to consult with stakeholders at key stages of the process for specified periods of time, as well as informal consultation throughout the IRA process.

How will industry expertise be used in this process?

All necessary expertise will be used to assess the relevant quarantine issues associated with the proposed import of fresh decrowned pineapple fruit from Malaysia. Biosecurity Australia is inviting comments and submissions from all stakeholders, including industry.

What are the next steps in this regulated IRA process?

Biosecurity Australia will consider all submissions received on the draft IRA report during the 60 day consultation period and may consult informally with some stakeholders in regards to their submissions.

Biosecurity Australia will then prepare a provisional final IRA report, taking into account stakeholder comments. Under the regulated timeframe the provisional final IRA report is due by 9 June 2012.

The provisional final IRA report will be open to an independent appeal process if stakeholders believe there has been a significant deviation from the process as set out in the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2011*.

Background information

Does Australia export fresh pineapples?

Australia exports small quantities of pineapple to a limited number of countries.